

STATE of CONNECTICUT

Department of Correction

HANDBOOK FOR

VOLUNTEERS

INTERNS and



PROFESSIONAL **P**ARTNERS

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this handbook is to provide basic information about the roles and opportunities available for Volunteers, Interns and Professional Partners (VIPs!) affiliated with the Connecticut Department of Correction.

This handbook presents the mission of the Department, a review of appropriate conduct for citizen involvement, general security information and a listing & map to locate our facilities.

While this information is not intended to answer every question concerning responsibility and commitment, this Handbook addresses those areas of interest most expressed by past Volunteers.

It is important for you to read this handbook carefully and to use it as a reference guide. If specific questions or issues arise which are not covered, you may wish to speak with the Director of Volunteer and Recreation Services or a Volunteer Coordinator.

We will make every effort to inform you of policies, program changes and opportunities.

We hope that your experience with the Department of Correction is both challenging and rewarding.

**WE MAKE A LIVING BY WHAT
WE GET, BUT WE MAKE A LIFE
BY WHAT WE GIVE**
winston churchill

Connecticut Department of Correction **MISSION STATEMENT**

The Department of Correction shall protect the public, protect staff, and provide safe, secure, and humane supervision of offenders with opportunities that support successful community reintegration. The motto “P.R.I.D.E.” represents the Department of Correction’s value of: **Professionalism. Respect. Integrity. Dignity. Excellence.**

PRIDE

To complement the overall mission of the Department of Correction, the Volunteer and Recreation Services Unit continuously seeks VIPs to supplement departmental staff, and to offer inmates the opportunity to participate in recovery, restorative and re-entry preparation activities while incarcerated.

The Volunteer and Recreation Services Unit offers a wide variety of opportunities for approved Volunteers, Interns and Professional Partners to support agency staff in the provision of:

- **Addiction Services;**
- **Basic Educational Services; and**
- **Chaplaincy Services.**



“The ABC’s of Correction”

The goals of the Volunteer and Recreation Services Unit are:

- Develop an accommodating climate for Volunteers, Interns and Professional Partners;
- Establish standards and guidelines for organization and administration;
- Provide insight, information and technical assistance to develop activities;
- Recruit, train and supervise program staff Volunteers, Interns and Professional Partners;
- Plan and implement the orderly expansion of resources;
- Serve as a liaison to other public and private agencies;
- Provide information to the general public about the Department of Correction and its general functions.

WHY CONTRIBUTE?

People contribute their time and talents for many reasons. Whatever your reasons are, we are pleased to have you on our team.

Statistics show that over 50% of all Americans “give back” an average of five hours a week. We believe this reflects peoples’ desire to strengthen families and give something back to society by helping others who may be less fortunate. As a contributor to offender aid and restoration, you are performing a valuable public service.



You can help us by being a role model for inmates. You can help them learn to make important and constructive changes in their lives. You may help combat inmates’ feelings of isolation, alienation and despondency. As a “Helping Hand” you provide an important link between the inmate and the community. You bring a sense of “normalcy” and continuity of care to the correctional setting.

Since you are sharing your services, inmates recognize that your motivation is not purely financial in nature. Your contribution places a responsibility on the offender to become motivated and focused.

As a partner in corrections, one of your most important contributions is providing offenders with a sense of hope. A person who has hope can look to the future in a positive way. Through your donation of time and commitment, you can help make it happen.

WHY CITIZEN INVOLVEMENT IN CORRECTIONS

Volunteers, Interns and Professional Partners in Corrections have meaningful roles serving to:

- Assist staff;
- Diversify specific activities and programs;
- Facilitate inmates' recovery, restoration and re-entry into the community;
- Support families and children dealing with confinement issues;
- Building Bridges between the DOC and the communities;
- Mobilize community resources to interact with the correctional system;
- Infuse diverse opportunities into corrections; and
- Enrich opportunities for offender/victim aid and restoration.

Our communities augment and enhance the work done by corrections staff. Citizen Involvement strengthens formal treatment programs, supplements education and assists in stemming recidivism. Individuals contribute in such varied areas as preparing inmates for the GED exam, teaching chess, serving as artists-in-residence, organizing sports and recreational activities, getting involved in spiritual services, job placement, substance abuse prevention programs and one-to-one mentoring activities. While this list is not complete, it illustrates that individuals serve as key components in our effort to help inmates to make choices that may result in effective rehabilitation, recovery and re-integration.

**Citizen Involvement
Building Bridges**



AS YOU BEGIN

As you begin to prepare for working within corrections you need to examine the opportunities available. Select a program or activity that is consistent with your expectations, goals and abilities. You can accomplish this by reviewing the opportunities listed in this Handbook.

Once you have filled out an application and completed the screening process, you will need to attend a security orientation before you are fully authorized to contribute your time to a facility or community-based program.

We will direct you to attend a Safety & Security Orientation in a facility or field unit, usually one fairly close to your home. You will be given information regarding the Department, its policies and procedures, inmates, rules and regulations, information about dress code, expected behavior and general assistance to help you adjust to conditions within a restrictive environment.

You are expected to work within the boundaries of your specified assignment. Don't get involved in issues that don't apply to you or hamper personnel who have specific jobs to do. Stay focused and maintain goodwill and patience.

To be an effective partner in corrections you need to learn facility protocols and rules. In order to fit in properly, you must become aware of how correctional facilities & programs operate, where potential problem areas exist, restricted areas where only staff may go, and how to best assist staff members who are assigned certain tasks. It is important to realize that helping requires commitment. As a good helper or partner you must be dependable, make regular visits, have enthusiasm, give support, use good judgement, act discreetly and exhibit maturity and confidence.

**Become An
Effective
Partner**



GENERAL SUGGESTIONS

There are several suggestions that will help you to be a successful Helping Hand. Being familiar with them will give you a better perspective about which activities will offer the greatest satisfaction and personal reward.

Suggestion 1: Know Yourself

Determine what type of activities or programs are most meaningful to you. Do you consider yourself to be an innovator or do you like to have things laid out for you in advance? Do you prefer to perform tasks with measurable outcomes, or do you enjoy working on activities which may have less tangible results? Do you depend on feelings for your gratification, or do you rely on hard facts to assess results? Do you look for long-term relationships or short-term project oriented associations? Do you like working with machines, or are you more people oriented? Are you creative or process oriented? Do you need to see immediate results or are you more interested in long-term successes? Do you enjoy being part of a group process, or are you more comfortable working independently? Do you enjoy working on a number of activities concurrently, or are you more interested in bringing one project to closure? Do you prefer to assume a leadership role, or are you more comfortable being part of the team? Any skills or knowledge you possess could be just the thing someone needs.



Suggestion 2: Investigate the Opportunities

Talk to the people involved with inmate services. Find out what opportunities are available within the Department. Review activities and programs offered at each of the facilities. Look at where these opportunities are geographically located. Assess how many hours you would be able to allocate. Find out who is responsible for what activity. Attempt to learn what services may be available, such as transportation, mentoring and the like. List all of the questions and concerns you have in order to make an informed decision. If you feel that you need to visit a particular facility or program prior to taking on an assignment, communicate this to a Volunteer Coordinator. Be prepared, the Department wants you to feel you have made the right choice.

Suggestion 3: Learn the Ropes

VIPs are provided a Safety and Security Orientation. This training is intended to enable you to function effectively within an institutional or other restrictive environment. You should become familiar with and follow all rules and regulations. You will need to know the proper communication channels, protocols and responsibilities of those with whom you interact. You will learn why personal appearance matters. You will learn about contraband and why VIPs must refrain from bringing-in electronic equipment including, cell phones, cameras, and laptop computers. You will learn why books, gifts, business ventures & personal relationships with inmates are prohibited. For your protection, you will learn about confidentiality and why we do not share personal information with inmates, including phone numbers, addresses. You will learn 'best practices' and be reminded, if you are unsure of what course of action to take, not to hesitate to ask your DOC supervisor for guidance.

TRAINING/ORIENTATION

The purpose of the Department's requirement that you participate in Safety and Security Orientation and subsequent training conferences is to prepare you to work confidently and successfully by providing you with information, techniques and skills. We know that the time and resources you will bring to the correctional system are invaluable. Your willingness to share your time and effort to affect personal growth and well being in the lives of those who are incarcerated supports the Department's goal to reduce criminality and recidivism.

All "VIPs" are required to receive eight hours of training annually to ensure familiarity and compliance with current policies, procedures & protocols. In these orientation, conferences, forums or on-the-job training sessions, you will receive instruction on your relationship with staff, your supervisor or program coordinator, how and whom to contact if you cannot keep a scheduled commitment and required sign-in procedures. Your role as a "partner" will be discussed and your responsibilities will be outlined. You will learn how your relationship with staff will impact your success and how to support inmate services effectively.

You will learn about the state's correctional facilities. You may meet correctional employees including Counselors, Recreation Supervisors, Program Coordinators, Correctional Officers and Chaplains. These individuals and their professionalism will give meaning to the purpose, philosophy, organization and lines of authority, which define the Department. The role of staff and community support and the importance of good working relationships will also be discussed.

Rules and regulations will be reviewed, including relationships with inmates, confidentiality, expectations and reporting procedures. Specific procedures such as parking, signing-in and unique aspects of each setting will be explained during the site-sensitization.

To help you become acclimated to a correctional setting, you will learn what to expect, the most effective ways of dealing with inmates and explanations of their needs. You should direct any unanswered questions to the trainer so that you will be completely at ease with your new assignment. Of course, as with every other new endeavor, you'll learn more "on the job".

After completion of training you will receive an identification card. To expedite your entry to any correctional facility, you should make sure that the facility Volunteer Coordinator has approved your visit and that the inmate(s) you are planning to see are aware of your intended schedule. Leave your ID at the facility control center upon arrival. Always pick up your ID before you exit.

If you intend to visit any institution, other than where you have been scheduled, ensure that you call the facility VIP Coordinator and request prior approval. Clearly state your reason for wanting to visit and wait for permission before planning to visit. If cleared to participate you will be scheduled to participate in a 'site sensitization' ensuring you are familiar with the new staff contacts, facility's protocols and emergency procedures.

GUIDELINES

- Be prepared to invest your time. Live up to your commitment.
- Be patient. Miracles don't happen overnight.
- Hear what is being said. It is easy to talk; the real art is listening.
- Be prepared to work with people from diverse cultural backgrounds.
- Respect others. Respect forms a basis for a positive relationship.
- Be an image builder. Demonstrate self-esteem and build up self-esteem in others. Each person is important and of value.
- Help others acquire the ability to make the right choices for themselves. Never force your opinions on others.
- Be a good role model. Lead by example.
- Do not engage in gossip.
- The rules and regulations of the Department are to be followed by everyone. Never show preferential treatment.
- Keep your word. Don't make promises you can't fulfill. Doing so is irresponsible and only communicates bad faith.
- Be objective and don't be tempted to take sides. Don't let your emotions put you at odds with the Department or the inmate.
- Dress suitably for your role.
- Make your program coordinator aware of any family relationships or friendships you have with inmates. This will avoid any potential conflicts or allegations of "undue familiarity".
- Don't engage in activities that could compromise your integrity or effectiveness as a VIP.
- Refrain from using inappropriate signs of affection that may be misinterpreted.
- Don't probe or delve into an offender's criminal history. Respect privacy.
- Be supportive, not subversive. Offer suggestions, not criticism.
- Conduct yourself in accordance with the rules.
- Be an asset, not a liability. Cooperate fully with correctional staff.

- Follow schedules to avoid conflict with other activities. The safe & secure operation of the facility is everyone's priority.
- Use appropriate language.
- If you cannot keep an appointment, please notify the person in charge.
- Learn to discern. Listening does not mean that you have to believe everything you hear.
- Check the facts. Do not be manipulated.
- Don't pre-judge. We all have prejudices. Make a conscious effort to overcome biases.
- Be ready for setbacks. Don't give up. Growth will come through perseverance.
- Be yourself. Nobody likes a "phony".
- We all make mistakes... don't be afraid to admit yours.

Remember, you are entering into new relationships. These relationships should be positive. People are changed for better or worse through these interactions. Make the best of it.



RULES FOR HELPING HANDS

Volunteers in Connecticut Corrections must adhere to the following:

1. Take nothing, including letters, cell phones or personal items in or out of any correctional facility.
2. Respect the confidentiality of records and other privileged information.
3. If your address or phone number changes you will update the facility VIP Coordinator in a timely manner.
4. If you are experience a personal hardship, please inform your primary VIP Coordinator, and if appropriate, take leave from your VIP functions until matters are resolved.
5. Do not make phone calls or perform similar services for inmates. Do not give offenders personal information, including your phone numbers or home addresses.
6. Refrain from taking photographs on institutional property for any purpose without specific permission of the administration.
7. Refrain from giving absolutely anything to inmates without explicit permission.
8. Report any ideation about self-harm or suicide, threats against staff, inmates or VIPs or threats of damage to state property along with suspected inappropriate activities.
9. Leave nothing behind for the inmates' use, even if permission was given to bring it in. Follow staff guidance at all times.
10. Refrain from inappropriate signs of affection which may be misinterpreted.
11. Transport an inmate only to an authorized destination if the inmate is on furlough.
12. Do not enter into business ventures with inmates.
13. Do not give or receive gifts, loans or articles from inmates.
14. If arrested, for any reason, report to the facility VIP Coordinator as soon as possible.

It is imperative that, as a **Volunteer, Intern or Professional Partner**, you understand that you may be exposed to danger, injury, infectious disease or assault.

DIRECTORY OF OPPORTUNITIES:

The ABC's of Corrections

To help you get involved, we have listed various job descriptions. If you have a particular skill or ability which is not represented in this Directory, call or write to the Director of Volunteer and Recreation Services.

ADDICTION SERVICES:

Alcoholics Anonymous/Narcotics Anonymous: Service providers are needed to lead Open Book, Panel & Step Meetings. Qualified sponsors, speakers & individuals with familiarity with AA or NA 12-Step Programming are encouraged to apply.

Adult Children of Alcoholics (ACOA) , Ala-Teen, Cocaine Anonymous, Gamblers Anonymous, Parents Anonymous, & "Overcomers": Qualified service providers with experience to strengthen or broaden recovery Step Programming are needed in most locations.

Self-Help Programs: VIPs with resources & experience in organizing and facilitating self-help activities are encouraged to offer their expertise to staff in our efforts to diversify opportunities for inmates in all institutions & centers.

BASIC EDUCATIONAL SERVICES:

Alternatives to Violence Project: The AVP Project is a multi-cultural organization of volunteers offering experiential workshops that empower individuals to re-channel anger, aggression & free themselves from violence. Volunteers must believe that there is a power for peace and good in everyone and that this power has the ability to transform violence. AVP builds upon a spiritual base of respect and caring for self and others.

Artists In Residence: In this role, artists introduce inmates to the value of visual arts – drawing, painting & sculpture as well as poetry, creative writing & 'expressive arts therapy'. Some inmates are 'beginners' others are highly advanced. These activities may be collaborated with the CPA Prison Arts Program or offered by unaffiliated artists or groups. Donations of arts & crafts supplies are welcome.

Clerical/Administrative Support: VIPs may assist agency staff with filing, building mailing lists, making labels, copying documents, typing reports, conducting research, networking with local resource providers, and assisting with the screening and training process for new VIPs.

Community Services: VIPs may be needed in Parole Offices, Halfway Houses & community-based programs to help organize activities for inmates returning to the community, such as life skills, mentoring, family counseling, housing & job referrals or AA/NA fellowship.

Health Education/Disease Prevention: VIPs may help organize education & prevention support groups through the CPA-Beyond Fear Program (HIV Prevention) or UCONN's Correctional Managed Health Care Unit, (i.e. Mental Health; Nursing; Diabetic Care, etc.)

Hospice: Hospice trained volunteers may work with facility-based Hospice Programs at MacDougall CI (Suffield), Osborn CI (Somers) and York CI (Niantic).

Internships: Non-stipend internship opportunities are available where supervision by qualified, professional staff is available. Daytime hours preferred. Mature, dependable interns are encouraged to participate in program cross-training to learn to organize & conduct inmate groups like 'Thinking for a Change', PEP, Thresholds Beyond Fear, VOICES-Victim Services or other groups (some more fully described in this section).

Literacy Volunteers: VIPs who have been trained to utilize LVA's methods and materials are encouraged to mentor & support inmates functioning as 'peer tutors' in correctional school settings. LVA training can be facilitated by calling any of Connecticut's numerous affiliate organizations.

Mentors for Children of Prisoners: Qualified mentors are needed by numerous community-based agencies to support children with a parent in prison. If you are interested in becoming a mentor for children with a 70% greater risk of becoming incarcerated than kids without a parent in prison/jail call the Governor's Prevention Partnership for more information about opportunities.

Mini-Course Instructors: VIPs with an ability to teach or organize 'continuing education' activities, especially in the areas of parenting, arts & crafts, hobby clubs, business affairs or fitness/wellness are encouraged to draft a curriculum or course objectives. Such classes may be one time seminars or limited to a number of weeks, or scheduled as needed to fully cover course goals. RSVP & SCORE volunteers (retired executives) welcome.

Parenting/Family Aides: VIPs are needed to promote family awareness & parenting skills. Some may be able to assist inmate's families by helping them to learn to cope with loss of income & promote involvement in community based mentoring services. VIPs assist staff in the operation of Family Visitor Centers at Osborn CI and Niantic CI or help to strengthen or initiate Family Support Services in most facilities. Some Volunteers may be qualified for training to serve as mentors for Youthful Offenders incarcerated at MYI (boys) or York CI (girls).

PEP-People Empowering People: PEP and the Epiphany Mentor Project are activities sponsored by UCONN's Haddam Office Field Service Educator, Cherry Czuba. PEP volunteers are trained to facilitate inmate's self-development goals and mobilize volunteer presenters to enrich inmate groups. Epiphany (faith-based) mentors develop resources for women leaving York CI & returning home.

Professional Partners: Professional Partners, including DOC Research Associates, GED Examiners or employees of correctional support agencies may be provided a Safety & Security Orientation and VIP-Identification Card to facilitate visits to institutions or field components. These 'partners' are highly valued & their work in facilities is facilitated via an e-data base.

Recreation Specialists: If you have experience coaching or facilitating sports, aerobics, yoga, meditation or other fitness/wellness 'dis-ease prevention' activities you may be able to assist Recreation Supervisors in structured programs for inmates. VIPs are also needed to oversee inmates with gardening, grounds beautification or green house projects. Help is also welcome to enhance inmate newsletters & to update facility visitor's kiosks. Those able to organize chess, dominos, checker & card tournaments or other passive recreational activities are also welcome.

Thresholds: Cheshire Thresholds is an all volunteer organization which trains volunteers to teach inmates decision-making and problem-solving skills. Threshold's volunteers conduct weekend training sessions twice each year to orient new Volunteers to a program manual and instructional resources. Volunteers are asked to support three 12-week cycles or about 100hrs per year in the Cheshire/New Haven area. Limited scheduling is available at the York women's facility in Niantic.

Tutors & Sponsors: Tutors and/or sponsors may work with correctional teachers or counselors to help inmates with special challenges. Some may help to improve inmate's abilities to read, write and learn. Those with ESL (English as a Second Language) training are especially needed. Some sponsors may work with inmates with 'special needs' who often lack visits or regular contact from the outside community.

VOICES/Victim Services: VIPs are needed to help program counselors organize sensitivity groups for inmates to make them aware of the negative impact of crime on individuals, families and the community. VOICES is an acronym for Victim-Offender Institutional Corrective Education Services.

CHAPLAINCY SERVICES

Alpha Mentors: Alpha Mentors are faith-based volunteers organized & trained by religious Program Leaders to help inmates develop a greater understanding of the role of God & religion in their daily lives.

Amachi/Family Friends: This is an activity for organized faith-based volunteer groups who may 'partner' with the DOC to mobilize community-based mentors for children with an incarcerated parent. This program provides a unique opportunity for religious groups to develop mentor activities benefiting very special children as well as developing support for inmate's families preparing for reunification.

Prayer Group Leaders: Qualified faith group leaders are invited to assist correctional Chaplains in the formation of prayer groups and spiritual fellowship activities.

Special Services: Groups of volunteers in organized ministries, such as Alpha Mentors, Prison Fellowship, KAIROS or Emmaus may work with Chaplains to offer inmates retreats or special services, including life-skills seminars from a faith-based perspective.

Spiritual Studies: Religious volunteers are needed to work with Chaplains and Volunteer Clergy to broaden and develop inmates' understanding of their faith and its traditions. Volunteers are encouraged to develop a proposed syllabus/course outline which may include having interested inmates read religious literature with follow up discussion.

Worship Services: Ordained clergy are encouraged to volunteer to assist correctional Chaplains in the provision of Protestant, Catholic, Muslim, Jewish, Native American & other organized services for inmates on a regular schedule.

The 18 Connecticut Correctional Facilities & Locations



NORTH DISTRICT

Bergin CI

251 Middle Turnpike
Storrs, Connecticut 06268

Brooklyn CI

59 Hartford Road
Brooklyn, Connecticut 06234

Enfield CI

289 Shaker Road , POB 1500
Enfield, Connecticut 06083-1500

MacDougall-Walker CI

1153 East Street South
Suffield, Connecticut 06080

Northern CI

287 Bilton Road
Somers, Connecticut 06071

Osborn CI

335 Bilton Road, POB 100
Somers, Connecticut 06071

Robinson CI

285 Shaker Road
Enfield, Connecticut 06083-1400

Willard-Cybulski CI

391 Shaker Road, POB 2400
Enfield, Connecticut 06083-2400

SOUTH DISTRICT

Bridgeport CC

1106 North Avenue
Bridgeport, Connecticut 06604

Cheshire CI

900 Highland Avenue
Cheshire, Connecticut 06410

Corrigan-Radgowski CC

986 Norwich-New London Tpke.
Uncasville, Connecticut 06382

Garner CI

50 Nunnawauk Road, POB 5500
Newtown, Connecticut 06470

Gates CI

131 North Bridebrook Road
Niantic, Connecticut 06357

Hartford CC

177 Weston Street
Hartford, Connecticut 06120

Manson Youth Institution

42 Jarvis Street
Cheshire, Connecticut 06410

New Haven CC

245 Whalley Avenue
New Haven , Connecticut 06530

York CI

201 West Main Street, Rte 1
Niantic, Connecticut 06357

GENERAL ORIENTATION

Visitors are expected to use common sense and good judgment when confronted with a new or unusual situation within the correctional system. When there is any doubt as to a course of action, you should consult with your program Coordinator or in their absence, the facility Shift Supervisor.

The primary responsibility of correctional employees is to provide for the safety of fellow staff, including guests, and the safe custody of inmates in their charge.

As a contributor you must assist in this endeavor by reporting any action or condition which could compromise that responsibility. For example, information about inmates' behaviors/actions that could lead to escape, riot, suicide or damage to individuals or property.

You should remember to conduct yourself in a professional manner at all times. Do not use, nor allow an inmate to use, obscene, vulgar or profane language. Do not allow structured purposeful activities to deviate.

When within the security perimeter of any facility, you should not move around the corridors without staff escort.

Any sickness, accidents, or unusual behavior of inmates should be reported to the facility Shift Supervisor immediately.

If you are injured in any way while at a facility, report such injury to the Shift Supervisor immediately.

Unauthorized items should not be brought into or out of a facility by anyone for any reason. This applies to, but is not limited to, food, clothing articles, jewelry, paper supplies, photographic or recording equipment, pagers, cell phones and personal property not necessary for the performance of ones duties.

If you change your home address, report this change as soon as possible to the Director of Volunteer and Recreation Services. We need to know in order to update in case of emergency information.

If keys or personal items are lost within a facility, report such loss to your supervisor immediately.

If you know a relative or friend who is incarcerated, you should inform your supervisor. This is necessary to avoid putting you in a compromising or conflicting position.

Refrain from and report any behavior or act of a sexual nature directed towards an inmate by any employee, contractor or VIP. It is the responsibility of all to maintain professional boundaries with inmates under their supervision per PREA-The Prison Rape Elimination Act.

POINTS TO REMEMBER

- Do not make phone calls for inmates!
- Do not share photographs!
- Cell phones, Tape recorders, CD/DVD players are not allowed!
- Business ventures with inmates are forbidden!
- Never give or receive gifts, loans or anything from inmates!



SECURITY ISSUES

Appearance:

Keep dress simple and appropriate to the correctional environment. Pocket books and knotted ties are not generally allowed. Don't wear short skirts, shorts that expose body parts. Do not make your clothing style an issue. No excessive jewelry. If you wear a tie, clip-ons (pull-offs) are practical.

Professionalism:

Appearance, conduct, language and attitude reflect the character and integrity of the individual. Demonstrate 'good taste' and you will gain respect from everyone. Be patient with custody staff.

Personal Perimeters and Boundaries:

Whenever possible, everyone should use formal titles, for example, Warden, Sir, Officer, Mr., Ms., Mrs., Major, Captain, Lieutenant. You should not befriend, for the purpose of intimacy, any specific inmate. Act as a aide, assisting inmates to learn ways to help themselves. Never give out phone numbers, addresses, or personal information. Absolutely nothing should be taken in or out of an institution without specific permission from the administration. Safety and security is everyone's priority. Do not contact offenders outside of the institution, unless trained and supervised by DOC authorized staff.

Contraband:

Items such as candy, gum, foodstuff, clothing, jewelry, televisions, radios, coffee pots, books and many other items may be available to inmates with specific limitations. Anything not provided or specifically authorized by the institution is considered contraband or forbidden goods. Any items not specifically authorized will be confiscated. The Rules are for the safety and security of everyone. All facilities are non-smoking environments and tobacco products are strictly forbidden. Giving any items to an inmate could result in your dismissal and/or disciplinary action and loss of privileges for the inmates.

Con-Games:

Never agree to "bend the rules" because this can create a prime target for a con game. It is important to refrain from long conversations about personal likes and dislikes or other intimate matters. No favors should be accepted. Excessive compliments should be deflected. Requests for unauthorized materials should be denied. No should mean no! An inmate's defiance of any direct request should result in an immediate report to the Shift Supervisor. Gossip or stories about other inmates, staff or Volunteers should be avoided. Intimidation or hostility should not be tolerated. Pushing the limits of proper conduct will result in the termination of all activities.

Not all inmates are manipulative. One of the best ways not to get manipulated is never to do or say anything you would not want to be made public information.

Inappropriate and Mis-interpretable Conduct:

Some inmates may demonstrate a strong need for affection. Many inmates may view your expression of concern for them as a sexual signal. Should you sense an inappropriate relationship building, you should report it immediately. If you continue developing a personal relationship, be prepared to resign or be suspended by Volunteer Services.

Fearing relapse after release, some inmates may request you to provide them with shelter and support. You should never be the primary resource provider, rather a bridge to available resources. Your role is to help the inmate to help him or herself. You are advised not to give out your home phone number or address to inmates. There have been instances where inmates persistently beg assistance. There are cases where people have been hurt, victimized and unfortunately murdered. If you are cleared to provide follow-up services in the community, you should maintain frequent contact with your Program Coordinator.

Client Failure:

It is typical for as many as half of all inmates enrolled in activities to quit. Inmates have other reasons for wanting to be part of an activity, for example, free coffee, fellowship, movement outside of housing areas or gang activity. Report any confrontation, incident or important information about security concerns, such as escape, suicide or riot to the facility Shift Supervisor immediately. Do not give an inmate credit if not earned. Do not let inmates bend the rules or manipulate you. Stay focused on the inmates who want to learn and grow.

Bending the Rules:

Many inmates have become experts at storytelling. Problems do occur. These situations are best handled by staff. When you are 'taken in' by an inmate, make sure to report what you were told to your Coordinator. Ask the Coordinator to let you know if there was any follow-up or consequence to your report. Do not allow your integrity or purpose to be compromised.

- Do not let anyone convince you to mail letters.
- Do not let anyone convince you to carry correspondence between inmates in the same or different institutions.
- Do not let anyone convince you to bring packages from "families" in/out of institutions.

Management of Aggressive Behavior:

If an inmate becomes hostile, the best advice is to back off and remain calm. If alone, gradually move to where staff can see you. Correctional staff are trained to handle difficult situations. Remember that inmates have been convicted or have pending charges for criminal offenses. Many inmates have lived in harsh conditions. Physical intimidation and violence are a common occurrence for some. If an inmate is hostile or attacks staff, other inmates or threatens Volunteers, seek staff assistance immediately.

Emergency Procedures/Communications:

If you hear a fire alarm sound, you will be expected to evacuate the area in accordance with posted emergency exit procedures. Listen to staff as they may direct you to another area. If the fire is in the immediate vicinity, you should communicate the problem to staff and depart the area. Always make sure you have signed into the facility properly and staff know exactly where you are. It is also your responsibility to view and understand the emergency evacuation plan in your assigned area.

Follow all instructions given by staff. Each facility has a "Control Center" that can be reached by dialing a designated emergency code number. Just tell the officer where and what the problem is. If you find that it would be impractical to attempt to actually talk on the phone, then by simply knocking the receiver off the hook, the Control Center Officer may be able to identify the location of the problem and send staff to the scene without further action.

Critical Incidents:

In the event that an incident happens and you are in a dangerous situation, the best advice is to stay put until staff secures the area. Don't act instinctively, heroes can get hurt. Be cooperative with the antagonist. Comply with what is asked. Take cover and hide if possible. Keep a low profile. Don't judge, condemn or provoke. Do not make any threats or attempt to negotiate. Act naturally. Listen carefully. Be quietly observant and write down what was witnessed as quickly after the incident as possible. Seek counseling when it is over. No one should have to be alone after an incident. Make sure you seek out your Program Coordinator and discuss what to do in an emergency.

Security Risk Groups:

Inmates have utilized programs and activities to conduct gang business. Gang activity, such as displays of color, hand signals, and exchanging personal notes should be reported to the highest-ranking Supervisor in the institution. Gang activities can result in people being hurt. If you witness any suspected gang activity, be sure **not** to react directly. Do not do or say anything that might compromise your safety. Be discreet! When you are safely apart from all inmate contact, report what you saw or heard directly to the Shift Supervisor.

Infectious Diseases:

It is important to realize that the Department makes every effort possible to control infectious diseases, including HIV, TB, Hepatitis and others. However, every visitor should exercise caution because viruses, germs and contagious infections may spread quickly in institutional settings. A good rule of conduct is to presume that your health and well being, and that of others, requires attention and respect.

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW:

- Every inmate is tested for TB when entering the system.
- HIV and Hepatitis B are transmitted only by blood contact or body fluids.
- After admission, inmates are offered routine medical services and care.

Site-Sensitization:

Correctional facilities can be restrictive and potentially dangerous settings. Policies, rules and regulations are enforced to protect everyone's safety and security. Touring an entire facility may help you to become familiar with exits, movement and areas to be avoided. Housing units will not be included in tours other than when activities are scheduled in day rooms. What privacy institutional living provides is very important to most inmates.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF HELPING HANDS

- Always be honest with the inmate.
- Treat the inmate with respect.
- Talk to the inmate on their level.
- Be professional at all times.
- Be a role model for the inmate.
- Listen carefully with sincerity.
- Accept people with different values.
- Be persistent and patient.
- Be dependable.
- Be capable of empathizing.
- Be objective.
- Be mature and confident.
- Be enthusiastic.
- Use discretion.
- Submit reports when required.
- Seek to establish adult relationships.
- Use good judgment.

**Helping Hands
Make A Difference**



A GENERAL OVERVIEW

What to Expect: Expect the unexpected at all times. With people new to them, inmates and parolees tend to be reserved, even leery. Some will be friendly and outgoing from the start; others need time to build trust in the newcomer and confidence in themselves before they will take care to be polite and pleasant and adhere to the rules of the program.

Many inmates come from inner city environments. Some of their friends and relatives may have been or are presently incarcerated, some in the same institution. Many have held full-time jobs, some have never worked. Some are college educated, many are high school graduates, some left school at an early age, and some are illiterate. Many have been physically or emotionally abused, or both. The greatest numbers of inmates are from minority backgrounds. Many have used illegal drugs; many have habitually abused alcohol. Nonetheless, some are anxious to learn new skills and may work diligently to acquire new skills. Many are keen judges of character and superb con artists. Most have the courage to let you know how they feel without pulling any punches.

Inmates want to feel good about themselves. We need to help them to understand that “life is hard” and they need to develop goals and more acceptable thinking and to exhibit the motivation to implement practical and pro-social solutions to their problems. They need to acquire the proper education and skills to succeed and they need counseling to help them decide on the best choices to make. Most programs are structured to achieve a high degree of success leading to heightened self/other awareness, better choices, etc.

It is important for you to remember that inmates facing the realities of incarceration experience many limitations and few personal visits. Inmates entering the system from the community quickly perceive their loss of social identity and freedom to pursue feeling good. Phone calls are limited. Correspondence is limited. Showers and meals are scheduled. There are limited activities and occasional periods of isolation. There is usually no one to share personal issues and problems with and few to trust. Due to these circumstances, you may be vulnerable to inmates who try to persuade you to provide for their needs.

Most staff understand and appreciate your efforts. If at any time you have a question or need assistance, correctional staff are ready and willing to offer help.

Inmates who participate in elective activities learn to appreciate and respect those who commit to regular programs and schedules.

Unfortunately, behavior modification is, for most, a long and tedious process. Patience becomes the most important commodity you may possess.

Help us build bridges and pathways enabling offenders to develop productive lives. You serve a unique purpose by helping inmates to realize that they can grow to become good citizens and can accept personal responsibility for their behavior. Inmates know that you receive few rewards, if any, for the time and effort you invest in helping us to broaden and strengthen correctional programs and activities.

CONCLUSION

It is the intent of the Commissioner, Wardens and Staff to make the time you invest with us rewarding and safe. With your continued cooperation we are sure that this can be achieved. If this has not been said already, we wish to thank you for your help in corrections!

Best Wishes!

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For more information about the Connecticut Department of Correction you may refer to the agency's web site at: www.ct.gov/doc.

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